

# April 2008 Newsletter

## Native Plant Society of Texas - South Texas Chapter



### April 3rd – Monthly Meeting – Guest Speaker Karen Woodard

Thursday at 7 p.m. at the Garden Senior Center, 5325 Greely Drive, Corpus Christi.

Karen Woodard of the Texas Forest Service will give a talk on urban trees.

Also at the April meeting – MEMBERS please bring loppers, clippers, and possibly something native to plant. Our native garden is in sad shape. Come early or stay late and help us shape up the bed before the other gardeners decide to get rid of the native section!

### Please Support the Garden Council

Our chapter is able to meet at the Garden Senior Center for free because we are a part of the Corpus Christi Garden Council – all we pay is \$20 a year. Therefore, each club needs to support the annual Garden Tour which is the Garden Council Fund raiser.

**Our Next Meeting is May 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Speaker: TBA**

### Do You Know Your Natives??? Contributed by: USDA-NRCS Kika de la Garza Plant Materials Center



Plains bristlegrass is a warm-season, perennial bunch grass that is native from South Texas to New Mexico, Colorado and Arizona, and down into central Mexico (Gould, 1975; Hitchcock, 1971). Plains bristlegrass is the common name for *Setaria vulpiseta*, although in the past *Setaria leucopila* and *Setaria texana* have also been included under this common name (Correll & Johnston, 1996; Gould, 1975). Plains bristlegrass is found on open dry ground and in dry woods (Hitchcock, 1971) and “on well drained soils along gullies, stream courses, and other areas occasionally with abundant moisture” (Gould, 1975). It provides moderate to high quality forage for all types of grazing livestock (Gay, Dwyer, Allison, Hatch, and Schickendanz, 1980), and makes up “an appreciable part of the forage on southwestern ranges” (Hitchcock, 1971). Seeds are eaten by quail and other seed eating birds.



In 2006, the releases forming the Catarina blend of bristlegrass were cooperatively released by the USDA-NRCS Plant Materials Program, *South Texas Natives*, and the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station at Beeville. One component is a plains bristlegrass (*Setaria vulpiseta*) collected in Webb County, Texas. The other three components are streambed bristlegrass (*Setaria leucopila*) collected in Karnes, Bexar, and Willacy Counties, Texas. They produce seed from May to November. Their mature foliage height ranges from 1 to 4 feet tall.



The Catarina blend of bristlegrass is recommended for use in upland wildlife plantings and in rangeland seed mixes. It can be used in many types of conservation plantings, such as riparian buffers and filter strips. It has performed well at locations in the Rio Grande Plain, Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes, and Rolling Plains regions of Texas. Plains and streambed bristlegrass also occur naturally in the High Plains, Edwards Plateau, and Trans Pecos regions. The Catarina blend of bristlegrass may be adapted to these regions as well, but this has not been verified through field testing.

Info Sources: *Manual of the Vascular Plants of Texas* - Correll and Johnston; *The Grasses of Texas* - Gould, 1975; *Grasses of the Texas Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes* - Hutch, Schuster & Drawe, 1999; *Manual of the Grasses of the United States*, 2nd Edition - Hitchcock, A.S., 1971; and research performed at the PMC.



**Upcoming Events** (361) 852-2100 [www.ccbotanicalgardens.org](http://www.ccbotanicalgardens.org)

- **Creating Wildlife Habitat Landscapes** seminar - **April 5<sup>th</sup>** 10 a.m. to noon. Master Gardener/Master Naturalist Ernie Edmunson will show students how to transform their backyards into lush, colorful habitats for birds and butterflies by landscaping with South Texas native plants. Seminar fees are \$6, \$3.50 for members. Call for seminar reservations.
- **BIG BLOOM!** - **April 12<sup>th</sup>** from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. – The only plant sale & gardening festival of the year on Gardens & Nature Center ground. It's also DOLLAR DAY—visitors will be admitted for \$1 each. Children under age 5 and members will be admitted free. Besides shopping the big, annual plant sale, look for free children's activities, participate in beneficial insect releases, and tour the Gardens & Nature Center! Call for vendor, membership, volunteer or other information.
- **Basics of Floral Design** - **April 19<sup>th</sup>** from 10 a.m. to noon - Hobbyist Nan Bailey teaches attractive but simple designs, bud arrangements, wreaths, bow-making and basket arrangements. Class fees are \$6, \$3.50 for members. Call for reservations.
- **What's Bugging You?** - **April 26<sup>th</sup>** from 10 a.m. to noon - Learn to recognize the difference between pests and beneficial landscape insects at the seminar. Master Gardener Cindy Straub shares her expertise on insect varieties, identification and best methods to control the bad guys in your landscape. Class fees are \$6, \$3.50 for members. Call for reservations.
- **Free PROJECT LEARNING TREE** - **May 10<sup>th</sup>** - A one-day short course for elementary science and social studies teachers, kindergarten through eighth grades. Teachers from any area school district may enroll. Class size is limited to 20 students. Instructor is STBGNC Executive Director, Michael Womack, Ed.D. Pre-registration is required. Call for information. Teacher Tuition Underwritten by AEP Texas. (The course also will be offered July 2 and September 6.)

### **NPSOT Calendar Fall 2007- Spring 2008**

- **April 3<sup>rd</sup>** - NPSOT Monthly Meeting 7 p.m. – Speaker Karen Woodard
- **May 1<sup>st</sup>** - NPSOT Monthly Meeting 7 p.m. – Speaker T.B.A.
- **June – August – No meetings.** Have a safe summer!

### **Chapter Contacts**

Ann Hoch (President) (361) 991-8063 ann712@grandecom.net	Shelly Maher (Newsletter) (361) 584-1486 shelly_maher@hotmail.com	Carolyn Chancellor (CCBG Native Garden) (361) 749-4461, clchancellor@charter.net	Dr. Alice Hempel (361) 593-3804 a-hempel@tamuk.edu	Ernie Edmondson (361) 729-3990 erniel@hughes.net
---	--	---	--	--

**State Web Site** [www.npsot.org](http://www.npsot.org)